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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4127

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

DIA WASH DC

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 2324

USCINCEUR FOR POLAD

USDOCOSOUTH FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CY

SUBJ: GREEK CYPRIOT POLITICAL SCENE

SUMMARY.

WITH LESS THAN A MONTH TO GO BEFORE THE GREEK CYPRIOT ELECTIONS
FOR A NEW HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES SET FOR SEPTEMBER 5, ONLY THE PARA

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METERS OF UNCERTAINTY SEEM CLEAR. ARCHBISHOP MAKARIOS,
WHO TRADITIONALLY
HAS SOUGHT TO KEEP CONTROL OF EVENTS BY MAINTAINING A POLITICAL
EQUILIBRIUM, EARLIER WAS PROMOTING KYPRIANOU AND THE DEMOCRATIC FRONT

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AS A NON-LEFTIST ALTERNATIVE TO CLERIDES AND ONE COMPONENT OF A
POSSIBLE "POPULAR FRONT" WITH AKEL AND EDEK. HE NOW, HOWEVER, APPEARS

TO BE MOVING AWAY FROM "POPULAR FRONT" IDEA AND TOWARDS SOME ACCOMMODATION WITH CLERIDES. HOW FAR HE WILL MOVE IN THIS DIRECTION REMAINS TO BE SEEN. OTHER UNCERTAINTIES INCLUDE: ACTUAL VOTING STRENGTH OF EACH OF THE PARTIES, WHETHER A PRE-ELECTION AGREEMENT ON NUMBERS OF DELEGATES WILL OR CAN BE MADE AND WHO THESE DELEGATES WILL BE, WHAT ROLE IF ANY TASSOS PAPADOPOULOS WILL PLAY IN ELECTIONS. END SUMMARY

1. SINCE THE BEGINNING OF AUGUST THE PROSPECT OF SOME SORT OF A POPULAR FRONT OF CENTER AND LEFTIST FORCES CONTESTING ELECTION WITH COMBINED SLATES OF DELEGATES HAS APPEARED TO RECEDE. AT BEST, A WEDDING OF COMMUNIST AKEL, LYSSARIDES' PSEUDO-SOCIALIST EDEK AND KYPRIANOU'S NEWLY-FORMED DEMOCRATIC FRONT COULD ONLY HAVE RESULTED IN A MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE. TOWARD END OF JULY AKEL LEADER PAPAIOANNOU INDICATED TO EMBOFF THAT NEGOTIATIONS ON COMBINED SLATES OF THE THREE PARTIES WERE EXPECTED TO BE PROTRACTED AT BEST AND MIGHT NEVER RESULT IN AGREEMENT DUE TO EDEK'S EXAGGERATED DEMANDS. AT SAME TIME LYSSARIDES TOLD EMBOFF THAT EDEK INTENDED TO CONSIDERABLY INCREASE ITS STRENGTH AND WOULD BE SEEKING SOMETHING ON THE ORDER OF EIGHT SEATS. (CLAIM TO EIGHT SEATS APPEARS TO BEAR NO REAL RELATIONSHIP TO EDEK'S ACTUAL VOTING STRENGTH, WHICH IS VARIOUSLY ESTIMATED BETWEEN 5 AND 10 PERCENT.)

2. AN UNKNOWN STRENGTH (OR WEAKENESS) IN THE POPULAR FRONT FORMULA IS KYPRIANOU AND HIS UNTRIED DEMOCRATIC FRONT. ON ONE HAND HE WAS ENCOURAGED IN THIS POLITICAL EFFORT BY THE ARCHBISHOP AND HAS PITCHED HIS CAMPAIGN ON THEME THAT HE IS SUPPORTED BY AND FULLY SUPPORTS MAKARIOS. THE RELATIONSHIP WITH MAKARIOS WILL DOUBTLESS APPEAL TO MANY CYPRIOT VOTERS BUT NO LESS TO AKEL AND EDEK WHO WOULD ALSO BE SEEN TO HAVE BLESSING OF ARCHBISHOP IF POPULAR FRONT COMES TO PASS. ON OTHER HAND KYPRIANOU HIMSELF IS NOT CHARISMATIC POLITICIAN AND WOULD ADD LITTLE APPEAL TO A COMMON SLATE.

3. EARLIER IN SUMMER MAKARIOS APPEARED TO BE TOYING WITH IDEA OF POPULAR FRONT. DEMOCRATIC FRONT WOULD HAVE SERVED AS MAKARIOS' STALKING HORSE NOT ONLY ON CENTER AND RIGHT AGAINST CLERIDES BUT ON LEFT AS WELL VIS-A-VIS AKEL AND EDEK. AT THAT TIME HE WAS UNDERSTOOD
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TO BE CONCERNED THAT LEFT MIGHT GAIN MANY SEATS IN UPCOMING ELECTION AND DESTROY DELICATE POLITICAL BALANCE IN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. BY BRINGING LEFT INTO POPULAR FRONT WITH HIS MAN KYPRIANOU. MAKARIOS WOULD HAVE BEEN IN BETTER POSITION TO COUNTERACT ANY UNDESIRABLE EFFECT OF LEFTIST VICTORY (BY BLURRING TRUE EXTENT OF LEFTIST STRENGTH) AND TO PORTRAY RESULT AS VICTORY FOR KYPRIANOU AND CENTER IN WHICH LEFT ALSO PARTICIPATED. ARCHBISHOP WAS ACTIVELY ENCOURAGING CENTRIST BUSINESSMEN TO JOIN KYPRIANOU'S PARTY AS ONE MEANS OF KEEPING IT IN THE CENTER OF THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM AND THEREBY ANCHORING WHOLE POPULAR FRONT CLOSER TO CENTER.

4. PRO-CLERIDES' SIMERINI AUG 7 INDICATED MAKARIOS MAY BE HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS. PAPER PUBLISHED STORY OF MEETING BETWEEN CLERIDES AND ARCHBISHOP AT LATTER'S INITIATIVE AUGUST 5. PAPER REPORTED MAKARIOS ASSURED CLERIDES THAT HE DOES NOT WANT HIS POLITICAL LIQUIDATION AND THAT HE CONDEMNNS RECENT ROWDY INCIDENTS AT CLERIDES' GATHERINGS. MAKARIOS, ACCORDING TO PAPER, LIGHTLY PROBED POSSIBILITY OF CLERIDES' DEMOCRATIC RALLY COOPERATING IN SOME WAY WITH KYPRIANOU'S DEMOCRATIC FRONT. CLERIDES IS REPORTED TO HAVE TURNED ASIDE THIS SUGGESTION WITH OBSERVATION THAT DOORS OF DEMOCRATIC RALLY ARE ALWAYS OPEN FOR THOSE WHO MIGHT WISH TO JOIN IT AFTER CONSCIOUSLY ADOPTING ITS PRINCIPLES. REPORTED MEETING, CONFIRMED BY OTHER SOURCES, HAS CONSIDERABLY IMPROV

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ED MORALE AMONG CLERIDES' SUPPORTERS. THEY ARE INTERPRETING IT AS FURTHER EVIDENCE OF MAKARIOS' RECONSIDERATION OF KYPRIANOU AND POPULAR FRONT AND OF HIS DESIRE TO AVOID OVERIDENTIFICATION WITH MAN WHO HAS MET WITH LESS THAN ENTHUSIASTIC RESPONSE FROM PUBLIC. ONE LINE OF THINKING HAS IT THAT MAKARIOS MAY BE BECOMING CONCERNED THAT IMAGE OF LARGE, VICGORIOUS POPULAR FRONT WITH COMMUNIST INVOLVEMENT UPSET THE WEST AND THEREBY UNDERMINE WEST'S WILLINGNESS TO HELP SOLVE CYPRUS PROBLEM. OTHER LINE OF THINKING, SHARED BY MANY WHO ARE THEMSELVES BY NO MEANS FRIENDLY TO CLERIDES, HAS IT THAT MAKARIOS IS CONCERNED THAT IF THERE WAS POPULAR FRONT SWEEP IN CYPUS' WINNER-TAKE-ALL MAJORITY SYSTEM CLERIDES COULD GET UP TO 30 PERCENT OF POPULAR VOTE BUT NOT ANY HOUSE SEATS. THIS WOULD HAVE POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS EFFECT OF EXCLUDING NEARLY ALL OF REIGHT AND NOT INCONSIDERABLE OF CLERIDES' SUPPORTERS IN CENTER FROM POLITICAL PROCESS AND ANY REPRESENTATION FOR NEXT FIVE YEARS AT LEAST.

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5. EVEN IF AL PARTIES RECEIVE AN APPROXIMATELY PROPORTIONAL SHARE OF SEATS, THERE REMAINS POSSIBILITY A SIGNIFICANT PART OF THE RIGHT WILL HAVE VOLUNTARILY CUT ITSELF OFF FROM POLITICAL PROCESS BY ABSTAINING FROM PARTICIPATION IN SEPTEMBER'S ELECTION. THIS IS BEING DISCUSSED PARTICULARLY BY THOSE WHO ARE STRONGLY ANTI-LEFTIST BUT WHO CANNOT BRING THEMSELVES TO SUPPORT BIZONAL SOLUTION OR TYPE OF COMPROMISE WITH RUKS CLERIDES IS THOUGHT TO REPRESENT.

6. MAKARIOS' DEPARTURE AUGUST 13 FOR COLOMBO AND NON-ALIGNED MEETINGS APPEARS TO E DEPRIVING CYPRIOT POLITICAL THEATER OF ITS LEADING ACTOR AND PLAYWRIGHT. SEASONED OBSERVERS OF CYPRIOT POLITICAL SCENE ARE MAINTAINING, HOWEVER, THAT ARCHBISHOP HAS ALREADY SCRIPTED OUTCOME OF ELECTION, DISTRIBUTION OF SEATS AND THAT WITH TASSOS PAPADOPOULOS HERE AS ACTING PRESIDENT DURING MAKARIOS' ABSENCE THINGS ARE WELL UNDER CONTROL.
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